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Maryland Department of Transportation

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OFFICE OF
HIGHWAY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Eric Marabello, Chief
Highway Design Division

ATTN: Mr. Matthew Stypula
Project Manager

FROM: Mr. Donald H. Sparklin
Division Chief
Environmental Planning Division

DATE: January 11, 2010

RE: FMIS #PG494B21
MD 5 @ I-95/I-495 Metro Access Study
Final Review (Revised Scope) - Phase 2

The following information verifies that the current design plan, when compared to that for which a Categorical Exclusion (CE) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will not result in significantly different environmental impacts.

- A. **Date CE/LA was approved by FHWA:**
CE/Location Approval: October 5, 2000
Final Review Reevaluation Phase 1: June 9, 2005
Redline Reevaluation Phase 1: May 19, 2008
Final Review Reevaluation Phase 2: April 6, 2009
- B. **Are the proposed improvements different than those approved for the CE?**
 X Yes No. Explain

This reevaluation compares the design changes on the final review plans for Phase 2 of the MD 5@ I-95/I-495 Metro Access study, Selected Alternate 3B, which received Location Approval as a CE (2000). The current revisions to the project were necessary to meet the compressed schedule requirements of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant which is part of the second stage for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 2009.

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The original project, to improve the I-95/I-495 ramps and access to the Branch Avenue Metro Station, was divided into two smaller projects after the 2004 Preliminary Investigation (PI). The I-95/I-495 ramp improvement portion of the project became Phase 1, while the creation of a new roadway to the Branch Avenue Metro Station and the depression of northbound MD 5 (from Auth Road to Auth Way) became Phase 2.

The April 2009 reevaluation reflected changes to the Phase 2 design based on suggestions from Prince George's County, who will assume ownership of the Metro Access Road upon completion of construction, and refinements to the hydraulic design.

The current design changes reflect cost and time containment efforts as described below:

- Auth Place will be widened four feet from Metro Access Road to Auth Road, becoming a 50-foot wide (curb to curb) section,
- Auth Place between Auth Way and Metro Access Road, as well as Auth Way will not be widened, and
- Auth Way will be resurfaced and restriped as a four lane section (52-foot wide), converting the on-street parking to a travel lane, and will include drainage upgrades.

The design changes will reduce underground utility and drainage impacts and costs along Auth Way and Auth Place by reducing the widening of Auth Place (previously 14-25 feet) and eliminating the widening on Auth Way and Auth Place.

Additional design changes include revisions to the stormwater management design. The pond at the southeast quadrant of MD 5 and Metro Access Road will be deepened an additional to accommodate the stormwater runoff from Metro Access Road. An additional pond, in the southeast quadrant of Auth Place and Metro Access Road, will accommodate the rerouted stormwater runoff as shown in the PI design.

The water main and natural gas main relocations have not changed from what was shown in the Semi-final design plans, with the exception of eliminating the need to relocate the underground communications facilities along Auth Place and Auth Way due to the decreased roadway widening. Sidewalks along Auth Way and Auth Place will continue to be set at five feet, or an extra foot in width, to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

All of the design changes described above occur within the original footprint of the MD 5 study area.

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C. Are the environmental impacts different? ____ Yes X No. Explain.

These design changes remain within the previously documented limits of disturbance, thus no additional coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust is required.

The environmental impacts are still within the approved Joint Permit Application (JPA), so changes to the environmental permits will not be necessary; the JPA has been extended through June 22, 2013.

D. Are there changes in the project surroundings (new development, etc.)?

____ Yes X No. Explain.

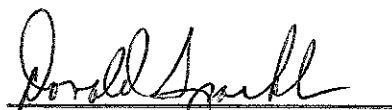
Since Location Approval for Phase 1 in 2000, no additional unplanned development has occurred within the project area. The character of the surrounding area remains consistent with Prince George's County Master Plan. Although the Branch Avenue Metro Station opened in January 2001, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's plans for mixed use Transit Oriented Development at the Branch Avenue Metro Station have not been developed.

E. Is the CE classification still valid? X Yes ____ No. If no, what additional or supplemental documentation is required?

F. Are the commitments shown on the plans? X Yes ____ No. Identify commitments including those related to engineering.

The pedestrian bridge, reforestation, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater management commitments are shown on the current plans. All but the pedestrian bridge will be approved by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources or the Maryland Department of the Environment. Noise walls were determined not to be reasonable or feasible because of: a) the predominantly commercial nature of the study area, and b) the fact that existing traffic noise on the adjacent roadways (MD 5, I-95/I-495 and/or Auth Road) are the primary generators of traffic noise in the study area.

Concur:



Donald H. Sparklin
Division Chief
Environmental Planning Division

Date:

1/11/10

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cc:	Ms. Karen Arnold, SHA-EPLD	(w/Attachment)
	Mr. Reginal Graves, SHA-EPD	“
	Ms. Allison Grooms, SHA-EPLD	“
	Mr. Gary Gray, SHA-OFIT	“
	Mr. Mike Rowe, SHA-OFIT	“
	Mr. Joseph Kresslein, SHA-EPLD	“
	Mr. Darrell Mobley, District 3	“
	Mr. Jitesh Parikh, FHWA-DelMar	“

Location Map: MD 5 Branch Avenue Metro Access

